

CATS: The Nine Lives of Innovation

Dr. Stephen Lundin

Written by: Caroline Coulet du Gard

---

The auditorium quickly filled with spectators and the chatter became silence. Dr. Stephen Lundin had an illuminating and charismatic presence as he took to the stage. Dr. Lundin began by thanking the Human Resource professionals for all that they do, and was happy to be presenting to this group on what he calls his “Gratitude Journey” tour.

Looking at the spectators, the level of engagement was obvious, Dr. Lundin was working his magic discussing his newest book entitled “CATS The Nine Lives of Innovation”. Dr. Lundin was building rapport with everyone in the room, and illustrating the book through some personal stories. The book depicts six assumptions of cats: 1. “All human beings have the capacity to innovate”, 2. “The Nine Lives are a curriculum for development of our personal innovation capacity “, 3. “We all commit daily acts of innovation”. 4. “The human brain is an associative mechanism that constantly builds associative networks”, 5. “Innovation brings vitality, meaning, and novelty into our lives”, and finally 6. “Innovative organizations are organizations with a lot of CATS!” As Dr. Lundin took us on his journey, it was clearly stated several times that “people innovate, not organizations”. The audience applauded this statement and he continued to emphasize that everyone is capable of realizing their own potential for possessing an innovative mind. Equally important was the follow up to this statement suggesting that by not allowing ourselves the gift to be innovative we disengage the flow of abundance to the human race. To further understand this statement we were led on the journey of CATS The Nine Lives of Innovation. Establishing goals and achieving goals mirror and compliment the path to innovation. Sometimes, in order to achieve our goals we have to become more innovative in style, delivery, and action. The basis

of Dr. Lundin's book clearly outlines the four basic challenges to innovation as well as the 9 lives of innovation.

The four basic challenges which were portrayed are: Distractions (clutter), Normal, Failure, and Leadership. Dr. Lundin expressed enthusiastically that "innovation requires spaciousness and silence", and that "fun is a good way to eliminate clutter". Another element that resides within the idea of innovation is the fact that although we are comfortable in what we claim as certainty, this certainty does not allow our creative juices to flow. Living in uncertainty can be freeing in the sense that innovation is the survival technique that one must rely on to contribute to the continued growth of the human race.

The Nine Lives of Innovation are: CATS create an innovation friendly environment, CATS are always prepared, and CATS know that innovation isn't normal, CATS welcome physical provocation, CATS enjoy social provocation, CATS promote intellectual provocation, and CATS say "How Fascinating!" CATS fail early and fail well, and finally CAT wranglers understand natural energy.

Dr. Lundin certainly turned up the energy in the room with his truly authentic and genuine hope that we all tap into our capacity to innovate. Many spectators remarking as they left "How Fascinating" his presentation was. This was a great way to start off our State Conference, with positivity, hope, and new goals to set. Thank you Dr. Lundin for showering our Human Resource professionals with Cat Nip and a box to play in, and escape out of from time to time. We are grateful that we were part of your "Gratitude Journey" tour. Surely, we will all be the CATS Meow this year with all of our innovative ideas 😊.